U.T. Status for Leh Region

355. SHRI P. PRABHAKAR REDDY:

Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Ladakhis in a representation to Union Government have demanded a U.T. status for the Leh region;

(b) if so, the details thereof and Government's reaction thereto;

(c) whether Government's attention has in this context been drawn to the newsreport in the Hindustan Times under the caption, "Those with guns are heard, we aren't Ladakhis tell Pant"; and

(d) if so, Government's reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI CHENNAMANENI VIDYA SAGAR RAO): (a) to (d) Yes, Sir. Following the adoption of a Resolution by the J and K Assembly on 26.6.2000 seeking restoration of pre-1953 status, the Ladakh Autonomous Hill Development Council, in its meetinmg held on 30.6.2000 had passed a Resolution demanding complete separation of Ladakh from the J and K State in the form of a Union Territory.

The people of Ladakh have been reiterating the demand for UT status for Ladakh region from time to time. However, such a proposal is neither received from the State Government nor is under consideration of the Government of India.

Arms Consignment from Bangladesh for North-East Militants

356. SHRI KHAGEN DAS: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the arrival of a huge arms consignment at Cox's Bazar port in Bangladesh for North-East militants in the first week of April, 2001;

(b) whether it is also a fact that these arms including rifles and high explosive materials are smuggled through the deeply wooded forests near the international border;